In the Claims:

Please amend claim 1 as follows:

SUB F1

1. (Amended) An object data search apparatus comprising:

a database for storing object data in association with a plurality of attribute words categorized according to sentence elements of a natural language;

an input unit for receiving an input of a search criterion in the form of a sentence of the natural language;

a criterion retrieval unit for analyzing the search criterion in the form of the sentence and retrieving one or a plurality of search words respectively corresponding to sentence element categories of the natural language;

an object retrieval unit for searching the database using each of the search words respectively associated with the sentence element categories, and retrieving the object data associated with the attribute words that match a single search word or a plurality of search words wherein filtering for attribute relation based on the grammatical structure of the natural language is performed; and

an output apparatus for outputting the object data thus retrieved.

Please add the following new claim 8:

--8. A method of searching object data comprising:

storing object data in association with a plurality of attribute words categorized according to sentence elements of a natural language;

inputting a search criterion in the form of a sentence of the natural language;

analyzing the search criterion in the form of the sentence and retrieving one of a plurality of search words respectively corresponding to sentence element categories of the natural language;

searching the database using each of the search words respectively associated with the sentence element categories, and retrieving the object data associated with the attribute words that match a single search word or a plurality of search words wherein filtering for attribute relation based on the grammatical structure of the natural language is performed; and

outputting the object data thus retrieved.--